

Testimony In support of HB 2414
March 31, 2015



The Problem

The National Institutes of Health has shown in replicated, longitudinal, independent studies that dyslexia affects one in five.¹ In terms of Oregon's K-12 students, that is roughly 113,000 students. Oregon's teacher education programs do not currently provide teacher training on how to effectively identify and teach these bright, eager and capable students. Teachers (including general education teachers, reading specialists and special education teachers) are not trained to provide the evidence-based instruction that these students need. Students with dyslexia in public schools continue to underperform and are at risk of dropping out.

Why Focus on Dyslexia?

- If children don't read at grade level by the end of third grade, they have a 4 times higher drop-out-rate and they have a 1 in 7 chance of ever becoming a grade level reader. [Annie E. Casey Foundation](#)
- 85 percent of all juveniles who interface with the juvenile court system are functionally illiterate. [US Department of Education](#)
- "The link between academic failure and delinquency, violence, and crime is *welded to reading failure*." Over 70% of inmates in America's prisons cannot read above a fourth grade level. [US Department of Justice](#)
- 2013 Annual cost of incarceration in Oregon is \$30,956 or \$86 per day. [Partnership for Safety and Justice](#)

Oregon families & teachers support dyslexia legislation.

Petitions and corresponding signatures were collected online and by US mail between Jan 26 – Mar 12, 2015.

The petition language:

As many as 1 in 5 students have dyslexia, and yet Oregon's universities do not provide teacher training on how to effectively teach these bright, eager and capable students.

I wholeheartedly support a dyslexia bill in Oregon that will:

- Ensure current teachers know the warning signs of dyslexia
- Ensure University teacher preparation programs offer coursework on dyslexia
- Ensure school districts screen for the risk factors of dyslexia in the earliest grades
- Ensure ODE has a dyslexia specialist on staff to help school districts address dyslexia

Results:

- **1,329** petitions signed, **25%** were current/former educators.

Addressing dyslexia is essential if Oregon is to achieve its goal of all students reading at grade level by third grade.

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¹The NICHD Research Program in Reading, Reading Disorders and Reading Instruction: A Summary of Research Findings. Keys to Successful Learning: A National Summit on Research in Learning Disabilities.